

Serial No. 09/707,852
Conf. No. 9828

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Art Unit: 1744

REMARKS

The Patent Office appears to have sent an original PTO-1449 form, submitted on 10/5/01 and signed by the Examiner on 6/1/03, to the Applicants. Applicants wish to ensure that the PTO-1449 form has been properly recorded by the Patent Office, and accordingly, are sending herewith a photocopy of the form for the Examiner's records.

Claims 1-57 have been cancelled without prejudice. Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims similar or identical to the subject matter of claims 1-57 in one or more continuation applications claiming priority to the instant application.

The Patent Office has indicated that claims 68-72, 75-83, 87, 88, 90, and 104 are allowed. The Patent Office has rejected claims 58-67, 73, 74, 84-86, 89, 91-103, and 105-111, for the reasons stated in the Office Action.

Applicants have rewritten allowed claims 68, 72, 75, 78, 82, 87, 88, and 90 in independent form. Applicants do not concede the merits of any of the rejections as set forth in the Office Action. However, Applicants have elected to cancel the rejected claims and/or amend the rejected claims to depend from allowed claims, solely for the purpose of expediting the patent application process. Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims similar or identical to the rejected claims as pending prior to cancellation or amendment herein in one or more continuation applications claiming priority to the instant application.

Applicants have also added new dependent claims to depend from the allowed claims as follows. New claims 112-118 are rewritten from claim 61 as previously pending, new claims 119-125 are rewritten from claim 65 as previously pending, new claim 126 is rewritten from claim 85 as previously pending, new claims 127-132 are rewritten from claim 89 as previously pending, new claims 133-139 are rewritten from claim 91 as previously pending, new claims 140-146 are rewritten from claim 100 as previously pending, and new claims 147-153 are rewritten from claim 111 as previously pending, such that the new claims depend from claims that are indicated to be allowable (rewritten in independent form).

Claims 61-66, 68-96, 100, 101, and 111-153 are now pending in the application, with claims 68, 72, 75, 78, 82, 87, 88, and 90 being independent.

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Serial No.: 09/336,091
Marked-Up Claims

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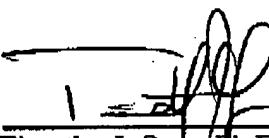
Art Unit: 1644

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicants hereby request any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted,
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Docket No. B01102.70000.US
Date: July 25 2003
x09/04/03

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